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Agenda item 5 (c)
High-level segment: annual ministerial review

Statement submitted by Albert B. Sabin Vaccine Institute, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08613 (E) 180615

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Statement

On behalf of the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases, an initiative of the Sabin Vaccine Institute, we submit this written statement to the Economic and Social Council to discuss neglected tropical diseases and "Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals: what it will take".

Neglected Tropical Diseases represent a group of 17 infectious diseases and conditions afflicting more than 1 billion of the world's poorest people and threatening the health of millions more. These diseases perpetuate poverty and inequality by causing blindness, malnutrition, anaemia, and disfigurement, and by preventing children from attending school and keeping parents from working. Every year, Neglected Tropical Diseases kill at least 400,000 people.

Neglected Tropical Diseases were not mentioned in the Millennium Development Goals (only as "other diseases" under Millennium Development Goal 6) and now the opportunity exists for Member Nations in finalizing the new sustainable development goals to ensure Neglected Tropical Diseases receive the attention they deserve.

Treating Neglected Tropical Diseases is extremely cost-effective and contributes greatly to the success of broader development goals. Successful public-private partnerships with leading pharmaceutical companies have made treating Neglected Tropical Diseases extremely inexpensive, and several partners have already integrated Neglected Tropical Disease treatments into their education, nutrition, and water, sanitation and hygiene programs.

We must look beyond the traditional way of thinking about Neglected Tropical Diseases and consider the broader health and security agenda. Ebola has taught us that weak health systems undermine a nation's ability to fight disease. Mosquitoes don't carry passports and vector-borne diseases like dengue fever and chikungunya can easily be transmitted across national borders. Since Neglected Tropical Diseases are primarily addressed at the community level, community-led efforts toward their elimination also serve as an early detection system for more deadly infections.

To effectively control and eliminate Neglected Tropical Diseases will require a coordinated global effort and finding the right set of indicators will be extremely important. An initial draft of indicators presented by the Statistical Commission prior to the 3rd post-2015 intergovernmental negotiation session (23-27 March 2015) failed to include indicators for Neglected Tropical Diseases. We see this omission as a great oversight, and urge the Inter-agency and Expert Group on sustainable development goals indicators, the Statistical Commission and Member States to insist on a global indicator for Neglected Tropical Diseases. The Neglected Tropical Disease community strongly recommends a 90% reduction in the number of people requiring prevention of Neglected Tropical Diseases by 2030.

Let's not allow the people suffering from Neglected Tropical Diseases to be marginalized once again. Those living in extreme poverty around the world are counting on our help.

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Statement submitted by International Federation for Family Development, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

15-08614 (E) 190615

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Statement

The family is a unique and effective agent for sustainable social, economic and cultural development, and therefore, a strategic focus on the family offers a holistic approach to solving some of the most persistent development challenges such as poverty, inequality and social exclusion. In the transition of the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, adding the family as an active member helps for have real promoters of development and well-being for all, because the families involve diverse groups: children, women, parents, ...

Following the report of the Secretary-General A/70/61-E/2015/3, the family policies frequently target children and/or women individually and ignore the family unit as such. Additionally, policies claiming focus on vulnerable families regularly focus on a mother and a child, with little attention given to other family members, including the father or the grandparents. In other words, the long-standing efforts of United Nations to protect Human Rights has empowerment at its core and has been enriched during the past years with the goal of empowering the world's women and empowering the world's next generation — its youth.

The post-2015 development agenda could remove barriers to the active participation of families in society, especially decisions on investments in health, child poverty, education, population aging, domestic work and care, youth employment, and domestic violence.

In any case, 'mainstreaming' may not be the right concept, because families are already mainstreamed. They are part of every society in many ways. All societal issues relate to family and family needs, either directly or indirectly. You can mainstream a new perspective or a new approach, but not the natural and fundamental group unit of society, as the E/RES/2014/8 resolution mentioned.

As basic and essential building blocks of societies, families have a crucial role in social development. They bear the primary responsibility for the education and socialization of children as well as instilling values of citizenship and belonging in the society. Families provide material and non-material care and support to its members, from children to older persons or those suffering from illness, sheltering them from hardship to the maximum possible extent. The very achievement of development goals depends on how well families are empowered to contribute to the achievement of those goals. Thus, policies focusing on improving the well-being of families are certain to benefit development (A/66/62-E/2011/4).

Consequently, to most effectively reach the sustainable development goals, we are arguing that we will have to do a better job in leaving no family behind. To start with, there are four areas of relevance to the family noted by the General Assembly in resolution 64/133: confronting family poverty; promoting intergenerational solidarity; reconciling work and family life; and collecting national and regional data on family well-being.

In that spirit, we suggest in the following pages to add explicit mentions to the family in the following targets of the sustainable development goals included in the Open Working Group proposal (and the latest proposed revision, March 2015):

(a) Child Poverty. The new promising approach to child poverty is two-generation approaches. Instead of focusing in children and parents individually, a

family approach will be used that simultaneously provides high-quality programs for children and their parents.

(b) Population Ageing. Active ageing allows people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well-being throughout the life course so they can continue to contribute to their families; also, it is families that assume responsibility for providing adequate protection, security, and care to aging members when and as they need it.

(c) Healthy Lives. Research shows that a family-centred approach to health care can improve the quality of care and help curb rising costs, whether prevention or chronic care.

(d) Quality Education. When policies and programs are family-focused, they often are an efficient in-vestment of public resources for promoting youth school success and an effective means for achieving lifelong learning.

(e) Unpaid Domestic Work and Care. Household production constitutes an important aspect of economic activity and ignoring it may lead to incorrect inferences about the significant contributions this unpaid labour provides to national and global economies.

(f) Domestic Violence. Gender equality and gender stereotypes, like many other values and norms, are learned in the family and it is there where it should be first prevented and its effects ameliorated.

(g) Youth Unemployment. Our societies are unable of integrating young people, leading to situations which cause young people to stop looking for a job, to work in unsuitable conditions, and to delay starting a family of their own.

It is crucial that the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, analyse the social and economic contributions that families make to society through the time, effort and money families invest in their members — children, youth, the aging, and those who are unable to care for themselves. Because these contributions often are taken for granted, there are too few incentives or supports to families for the benefits they provide to society and too little discussion of political instruments to empower families. And this step designed to help families would in return also help those who are part of families — women, children, youth, and the ageing.